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ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN THE REGION OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 49/71 of 15 December 1994, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to pursue consultation with the States of the region and other concerned States, in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 46/30 of 6 December 1991 and taking into account the evolving situation in the region, and to seek from those States their views on the measures outlined in chapters III and IV of the study annexed to his report (A/45/435) or other relevant measures, in order to move towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East. In paragraph 11 of the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fiftieth session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report is submitted in response to the request contained in paragraph 11 of the resolution.

II. ACTION TAKEN

3. On 17 March 1995, the Secretary-General addressed a note verbale to the States of the region and other concerned States requesting them to submit their views pursuant to paragraph 10 of the above resolution. One reply was received from a Government on the matter and is reproduced in the annex to the present report.

4. In accordance with the request contained in paragraph 10 of the resolution, the Secretary-General has, as in previous years, continued in various ways to carry out consultations with concerned parties within and outside the region to explore ways and means of promoting the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, taking into account in particular the evolving situation in the region.

5. In this connection, the Secretary-General is pleased to note that the matter has continued to receive attention in the framework of the multilateral Middle East peace process, particularly in the context of the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security where specific suggestions on how further to address the issue were put forward by several participants.

6. The Secretary-General also notes with satisfaction the resolution on the Middle East adopted without a vote on 11 May 1995 at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. 1/ By that resolution, the Conference "endorses the aims and objectives of the Middle East peace process and recognizes that efforts in this regard, as well as other efforts, contribute to, inter alia, a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons as well as other weapons of mass destruction" and "calls upon all States in the Middle East to take practical steps in appropriate forums aimed at making progress towards, inter alia, the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems, and to refrain from taking any measures that preclude the achievement of this objective". The

Conference also "calls upon all States party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to extend their cooperation and to exert their utmost efforts with a view to ensuring the early establishment by regional parties of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems".

7. In the view of the Secretary-General, the above action reinforces the acceptance of such a zone by the States directly concerned in the region as they had previously indicated, as well as the broad measure of support from those outside the region, including the nuclear-weapon States. Consequently, the Secretary-General calls upon the States concerned to increase their efforts with a view to achieving a greater convergence of positions on the timing and modalities of the zone, the two issues on which considerable differences remain between them. Such discussions by themselves would constitute a significant confidence-building measure and would represent an expression of good-will by all the States concerned.

8. The Secretary-General strongly believes that the discussions and further consultations on the matter among the countries of the region as well as those from outside could be conducive to creating conditions for concrete action. The Secretary-General therefore urges all concerned parties to tackle the issue with renewed determination with a view to achieving tangible results as expeditiously as possible.

Notes

1/ NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex.

Annex

REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

JORDAN

[Original: English]

[31 May 1995]

1. The Government of Jordan believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is an important disarmament and non-proliferation measure which strengthens the international non-proliferation regime and enhances international peace and security.

2. The Government reaffirms its commitment to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East in consistence with the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly (resolution S-10/2), as well as relevant Assembly resolutions, the latest of which is resolution 49/71, which was adopted by consensus on 15 December 1994.

3. In view of the ongoing peace process in the Middle East and the positive developments emanating from it, the Government of Jordan believes that the current circumstances are conducive to the early establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region through direct negotiations among them within the appropriate forums, including the Working Group on Arms Control and Regional Security of the Middle East peace process.

4. All States of the region are urged to take whatever practical and urgent steps are required for the establishment of such a zone. Pending the achievement of that goal, all States of the region that have not yet done so, in particular, Israel, which has a significant nuclear programme, are required to refrain from developing, producing, testing or otherwise acquiring nuclear weapons and from permitting the stationing on their territories under their control of nuclear weapons and to adhere without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; and to place all their nuclear facilities under comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).